

On First Study of the Talmud

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As young man I was a confirmed atheist as was my father, although both my father and mother were of Jewish descent. As I grew older and learned of the scientific method I became an agnostic. As I grew still older and learned quantum mechanics in depth, I came to believe in God. From a purely scientific point of view Judaism seemed to me to be the God model closest in conformity with reality.

At this time I had for over 20 years been following an ethical system based on the notions that the maximization of creativity was the basis of all good and that anything that decreased anyone's creativity was evil. The ethics of the Torah seemed to be in harmony with this ethic, which I call the "evolutionary ethic". Furthermore, it was obvious that as a group, the Jews were the most creative people in the world, relative to their numbers. The paradox was that the most creative Jews seemed to be secular Jews, and not religious Jews.

After reading the Torah several times and reading the writings of Maimonides, I studied the history of the Jews and Jewish anthropology. My big surprise was that the Jews were neither a race nor even a genetically homogenous nation; they always reflected the genetic make up of the people among whom they lived. The Jews, therefore, represent a genetically heterogenous people within an ethical culture, who have become Jews by choice. This is a much more wonderful thing than being a race.

This was a strong indication that the Torah was a mapping of ultimate reality so that people who lived in accordance with the ethical principles of the Torah would, in the long run, maximize their creativity, although these principles

followed mechanically, without understanding, would provide a short term disadvantage, as has often been the case for the Jewish people throughout history.

I had developed a scientific model that the ultimate reality of the universe is information, not matter or energy. Furthermore, this ultimate reality was tied to modern quantum mechanics as developed by David Bohm. This indicated that our reality of space, time, energy and matter was partially governed and perhaps created by a greater reality of infinite true information. This greater reality of infinite true information, existing in a timeless, spaceless universe, might be interpreted, metaphorically, as the memory of Hashem, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Torah in general and the ethics of the Torah in particular are highly metaphorical, although, as in the case of the Ten Commandments, the ethics can also be very specific. The main point is that the Torah must be interpreted. It is not devoid of ambiguity. The most enlightened interpretations of the Torah are in the Mishna and the Gemara, which together make the Talmud. Therefore, in 1995 I began to study the Talmud as a way of better understanding the Torah in order to better integrate Jewish ethics with modern science.

The study of the Talmud has convinced me even more, that the Torah is what I had seen it to be and that the ethics of both the Torah and the Talmud are in one to one correspondence with an ethical system based on maximizing creativity, the Evolutionary Ethic.

For example consider the Talmudic notion of kadusha, holiness. Quantum mechanics would predict, and experiment confirms, that the ethical use of anything would endow that thing with some ethical information; as it acquires more ethical information, it acquires more kadusha. The Talmud teaches the same thing, although it does so in a more metaphorical way./P> The Talmud also teaches that we should expect no reward from doing a mitzvah other than the

opportunity to do another mitzvah. Evolutionary ethics teaches the same thing, namely, that truly ethical behavior results from purely ethical intentions without expectation of reward or fear of punishment.

Remember that in my system the ultimate reality is information. Hashem, as a spirit, is pure information not dependent on matter or energy; He exists outside of time and space. This is also the nature of the infinite truth of quantum reality, according to David Bohm's model. It can also be shown scientifically that from information can be created energy; from energy can be created matter; from matter can be created life; from life can be created mind; and from mind can be created ever more information. This is the infinite upward spiral of evolution that has no beginning or end.

God is truth. God is infinite truth. Every scientific concept of ethics is in the Torah, as well as some of the implications of the latest findings in quantum mechanics. To me this is evidence that the Torah truly comes from Hashem and that those who work and study to understand and live by the Torah are truly following in the footsteps of God; therefore, they and their descendants will become ever more creative, as has been the case for the Jewish people, but has not been the case for any other people who always undergo a long creative decline after a brief initial period of creativity. A careful study of history shows that the closer a people live in accordance to the ethical principles in the Torah the more creative they are. People who grossly violate Jewish ethics, are totally uncreative. The Torah is a system for maintaining ethics in a people under the most adverse circumstances, as has been the case for the Jewish people.

However, part of this process is to eventually understand that the underlying ethical goal of the Torah is to make the people who follow its ethics the most creative on earth. Therefore, the fundamental ethical goal of all true Jews must be to maximize creativity.

Intuitively creativity is the process by which we discover scientific laws, invent machines, produce works of art, and help others do these same things. The most creative thing we can do for ourselves is to help maximize the creativity of another. In my books I have shown that creativity is equal to intelligence multiplied by ethics. In order to maximize creativity we must learn all truth and not specialize in any single truth. Judaism will have fulfilled its destiny when all Jewish ethics are fully integrated with all modern science and there is no conflict between the two. There can never be a conflict between true science and true ethics. Truth cannot contradict itself, and neither can God.

Spinoza said that the purpose of life is the intellectual love of God. According to Spinoza we love God by understanding and emulating Him. Again, according to Spinoza, we understand God through science and we emulate him (as the Torah says, "follow in His footsteps") by following his ethics as given in the Torah and the Talmud and summarized in the Evolutionary Ethic, "We Must Maximize Creativity". Scientific ethics, the Torah and the Talmud are a single ethical system.